close touch with each other's activities and needs. 621

These residence arrangements had considerable bearing on the amount of help at hand for a pregnant, parturient, or lactating woman, especially since every woman expected to bear her child at home. A woman's first child was often born while she was still resident in the house of her parents or parents-in-law. If the separate household had been set up, and especially if there were other small children, a parturient's mother or other relative came to stay with her for delivery and post-delivery care, or a woman might return to her parental or her husband's home for the event. In fact, since husbands and wives were both needed in the fields, it took great diligence for a woman, without extra kinfolk in the house, to carry on child-care, cooking, and field-work, and then undergo child-bearing besides. The extensive overlap in the division of labor (Sharp et al. 1953:94-98), though, resulted in much sharing by husbands in the household chores, so that the burdens were somewhat eased. Help in child-birth was one of the areas of mutual aid freely accorded by neighbors, so all women could count on adequate or even ample help at this time. 621 844 592 844 [462]

Wealth Differences:

Way of Life

Real polarities of wealth existed. A well-to-do person owned rice fields, a good house, and had many devoted kinsmen. Teachers who were governmental civil servants and a few of the traders were somewhat better off because they had regular sources of cash. A poor man, owning no land, lived humbly and hired out at day labor and other odd jobs. Yet the way of life of the well-to-do was not very different from that of the poor. Practically all persons worked in the fields or at related activities, wore the same cotton clothes, and ate the same food. Rice was plentiful. Fish, fruit, vegetables, and fuel could be amply obtained practically without cost, though it was also possible to spend money on these. Yet here and there persons were beginning to lose their old satisfaction in life as a farmer. Changes were beginning to come in, heralded by such things as hair permanently waved, gasoline pressure-lamps, increased geographical and political awareness, grumbling over the cost of living, and frustration over rising expectations. Urban life as met with in Bangkok was viewed with some awe as a glittering universe with different ideas and needs, yet also with some uneasiness. The city dwellers sometimes looked down on the country dwellers and made them feel uncomfortable. 556 875 441 [464] 556 511 178 369

FOOD IN CONNECTION WITH FESTIVITIES AND CEREMONIES

262 796 A discussion of food habits in Bang Chan would be incomplete without some description of ceremonies ((1)ngaan)[1] which dominate the village scene during the dry, post-harvest season. These events are of interest in connection with food habits because of 1) the prominent place that food occupies in them, 2) the cultural significance and relatively large cost, both of which must be taken into account in any plans for dietary improvement and 3) the possible influence of differences in food habits at the ceremonial season and of problems of sanitation incident to large-scale food preparation on the nutrition and health of village residents.

796 The season for ceremonies and festivities opened with the harvest rites to the Rice Goddess and closed with the beginning of Buddhist Lent in mid-July. The big occasions were cremations, ordinations into the Buddhist priesthood, weddings, and rites for cutting of the topknot[2] or homage-to-the-
527 teacher.[3] Smaller family celebrations might mark such events as the raising and dedicating of a house, the return of a son from the army, or even public events such as the completion
264 of a road or a bridge. Whatever the focal activity, a gala meal was served first to priests and then to guests.

[782] Offering food to priests brought merit, which ensured happiness in later rebirths (see p. 9). Because the greater the number of priests served, the greater the merit, people were spurred to put on as large an affair as they could
[554] afford. Moreover, a person was judged throughout the community by the abundance and quality of the food served daily and
527 at festivities. Thus, there was reason to make a (1)ngaan
796 as opulent as possible, but celebrations of every degree occurred in Bang Chan, from lavish feasts to simple ceremonies.

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[198] [461] 1. Significantly the same Thai word is used for work and for ceremony.

[302] [581] [138] 2. Topknots, formerly worn by all Thai children, used to be cut ritually at the time of puberty. In Bang Chan, the growing of a topknot had become primarily an attempt to improve a child's health. Few school age children were topknots. They were usually cut earlier than puberty.

[875] 3. A person who had received specialized knowledge from a teacher gave thanks annually in a ceremony, to which those who had profited by this knowledge were obliged to come and/or contribute. Thus, all the patients of a traditional medical practitioner helped him to honor his teacher.

796 The actual ritual of these ceremonies did not take a great deal of time although it was important. Most of the [716] time and effort went into preparing and serving food. Even a small celebration involved cooperative effort among relatives [782] and friends. For every event, the Buddhist altar in the home was decorated and offerings were made to the house-spirit. A 764 big cremation might require planning in detail for years ahead: 796 invitations to priests and relatives in distant parts of the 574 country; hiring an orchestra and obtaining ceremonial gear. [535] For the largest events, when the guest lists ranged upward to [428] 60 or so priests and 400 other guests, one borrowed the hundreds of trays, dishes and bowls owned by the temple. No rental fee was charged for these, but such items had to be returned the next day, clean, and damaged articles replaced or paid for. As the day or days drew near, boat-loads of fresh provender were bought at big markets, and organized cooperative cooking went on under the direction of a competent person, [258] usually one of the "professional" cooks of the village. The [476] day before one ordination, 33 women were seen preparing vegetables, fish and soup; 13 others were making 7 kinds of desserts; about 50 others of both sexes were at different tasks, the men in particular cooking Chinese noodles, grating coconut, stirring, stoking fires. The picture was one of rows of stoves, pots so large they were stirred with a boat paddle, buckets of sugar, eggs by the hundreds, a hired generator to run a mechanical coconut-grater. On this occasion two meals were served. At another splendid (1)ngaan, the priests were fed three meals, other guests up to eight meals, over a period of two and one-half days. Workers had received additional meals beforehand.

[262] The banquet comprised rice and many dishes not met with in daily fare: Chinese noodles; "with-rice" dishes of several kinds, rich in fish, meat and vegetables: for example, fried chicken with internal organs, garlic and pepper; fried pork with mung bean; (2)mii (a fried vermicelli) with fish, vegetables, and a tomato sauce; many different desserts made of eggs, rice flour, glutinous rice, agar, coconut and coconut milk, sugar, sweet potato, dried green beans; flowers served in syrup, fresh fruit such as watermelon; ices and coffee.

128 In Appendix A, p. 102 is a list of foods bought for an 262 annual homage-to-the-teacher rite. It is the nearest approxi- 796 mation to a quantitative record of food for a ceremony that 895 the research group obtained. The prominence of purchased foods, especially of flesh foods, is noteworthy.

264 On the great day, the priests were served first, either 796 at 7 a.m. or 11 a.m., or both, always at least in part by the 792 host, who sat and chatted with them. No one else ate until

435 196 [124] Some information as to the cost in baht of the larger ceremonies held in 1954, and their scale, was obtained from the school teacher's diary. Examples follow:

[792] Ordination: Total cost 8,000, including food 1400, liquor 800. Guests contributed 4000.

[852] Top-knot tonsure: Total cost 1550, including new utensils 550; 6 priests fed; each priest given 12 baht; 12 (2)pin-(1)toos filled to take to the temple; 100 duck eggs donated, and 300 baht received from 30-40 guests.

[714] Cremation[1]: Total cost 40,000[2], including about 10,000 for food; 61 priests fed[3]. About 500 guests contributed 4377.

[875] Homage-to-the-teacher ritual:
A: Total cost 715, including food 565 and liquor 150; 40 tang (800 liters) fish and 3 tang Chinese noodles donated.
B: Total cost, 11,000[4].

[585] Wedding: A: Thai Buddhist: Total cost 5000. Guests gave 2300.
[583] B: Rite of forgiveness after elopement: a meal, with 5 bottles of liquor.
[184] C: Moslem: 2 buffalo slaughtered. 400 guests.

585 262 [383] Arranged marriages could be large merit-making affairs, with a huge procession from one house to the other of twenty-four "pairs" of specified foods, i.e. two bearers each of sugar cane, fruits, sweetmeats and other things. At more modest weddings and the rite of forgiveness for a couple who had eloped, food might differ from the usual fare only by including the three essentials of a wedding: pork, chicken and alcohol.

273 796 443 Increased consumption of alcoholic beverages during the ceremonial season was indicated by the sales of one local

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1. Cremation was the last of several rites at death. Private 7-day, 30-day and 100-day rites were held, when priests came to the home to chant and to be feasted.

2. With cooperative assistance from well-situated relatives in Bangkok.

3. The whole chapter of priests from Wat Bang Chan [792] was always included at cremations, and often others from a [574] distance.

4. See list of food purchased, Appendix A, pp. 102-103.

cent of the respondents report that they have engaged in this activity). Even if no mushrooms have ever been grown in a given household, it is still likely that the individuals in it are aware of the practice and have observed it closely through the mushroom growing activities of their friends, relatives, and neighbors (reported in 43 per cent of the households). Only a few households (13 per cent) report that they have never grown mushrooms or have never been exposed to it in this way.

At the height of the boom, the demand for rice straw swept many of the fields clean of the stubble usually left there after harvest, thereby decreasing food for the roaming buffalo and the small increment of nutrients usually plowed back into the soil.

The advantages of mushroom culture cited by Goldsen and Ralis (1957) were 1) the cash outlay required was small, 2) returns were realized quickly as the cycle was completed in two to three weeks, 3) little heavy work was required and 4) at the time when Ralis made the survey, a ready market was available. When, in 1957, the price dropped sharply, most of the growers gave up.

Food for Homage-to-the-Teacher Rite
Performed by a Buddhist Priest Who Was
a Traditional Practitioner

Item	Amount	Cost in Baht	Item	Amount	Cost in Baht
Cereals and Legume Seeds:			**Fish and Meat (cont.):**		
Rice noodles		10.	Dried fish	6	gift
Soybeans & fermented vegetables	25 kg.	12.	Roasted fish	3 kg.	gift
			Shrimp paste	2 kg.	18.
Mung beans	10 lit.	25.	Lobsters		15.
Cassava flour		2.25	Lobsters (for soup)		7.50
Sugar and dessert:			Pig's skin (for soup)		10.
Palm sugar	1 pail	67.	Beef[1]	15 kg.	150.
Cane sugar	14 kg.	85.	Ingredients for Mussel-man curry[1]		27.
(2)Kha-(5)nom (3)tuaj-(1)foo	500 cups	35.	Boiled chickens[2]	2	22.
Fish and Meat:			Pig's head[2]	4 heads	222.
Fish ((1)plaa (2)myk) for soup		6.	Pork[2]	4 kg.	40.
Silurus and serpenthead	60 kg.	gift			

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435
796
[795] Food for Homage-to-the-Teacher Rite (cont.)

Item	Amount	Cost in Baht
Fruit:		
Bananas ((3)klua; (4)nam-(4)waa)	5 bun.	from father
Chico[2]		5.
Coconut	150	180.
Coconut (young, to make dessert)	30	30.
Job's tears	1 lit.	3.
Plums, yellow[2]		5.
Pomelos[2]		6.
Rose apples[2]		2.
Tamarind		7.50
Tomato sauce		8.
Young palm fruit[4]	7 sun.	3.
Vegetables (non leafy):		
Bamboo shoots, cooked	1 pail	28.
[272] Cucumber		--.3
[273] Egg plants		--.3
[274] Garlic	5 kg.	26.50
Gourd, white		1.
Onion, fragrant[5]		6.
Onion[5]	½ kg.	.3
Onion, welsh[5]		--.3
Mushrooms		3.
Radish, white		--.3
[564] **Vegetables (leafy green and yellow):**		
Cabbages		--.3
Chinese kale		--.3
Chili, green		7.50
Vegetables (leafy green & yellow) cont.:		
Lettuce		--.3
Parsley		--.3
Pumpkin	3 fruits	12.
Sweet basil leaves		1.
Sweet potatoes	6 kg.	6.
(3)Tang-(5)oo		--.3
Seasonings etc.:		
Vinegar	1 bottle	1.
Fishsoy	1 jar	10.
(2)Ka-(1)chaa;	2½ kg.	12.50
Sodium glutamate		5.
Pepper		14.
Agar	400 gms.	36.
Miscellaneous:		
Cola beverage	72 bottles	72.
Liquor	16 bottles	80.6
Ice		30.
Cigarettes	2 pkgs.	--.6
Tobacco	1 heap	--.6
Betel pepper		9.
Fresh areca nut		10.
Dried areca nut		8.
Dried palm leaves	1 big bundle	2.
Firewood		50.
	Total	1577.75

[184]
1. For Moslem guests.
2. Food items placed on a tray and used in the ceremony proper.
3. Items so marked cost a total of 140 baht.
4. Not identified.
5. Several kinds of onions, both fresh and dried, are commonly used.
6. Prices not stated; estimate for liquor.

178 laboring profession, limiting the work to transplanting only.
592 Apparently she did not earn enough. During this hard period
621 the young boy left her. The woman continued to live alone for two years. After the collapse of her shack in 1953 she went to live with a young couple in KY5 who are not related to her. In exchange for room and board and a nominal allowance, the old woman agreed to take care of the couple's baby.

178 Case 8: In 1949, a couple, both teachers in the Bang-
592 chan Primary School, were sharing the same dwelling with the
• 845 wife's mother's family, but having a separate food arrange-
434 ment for themselves and their two young daughters. Thus,
621 they appeared in the 1949 census as a separate family. In
[416] local standard, the combined income of these two teachers was quite high. The family lived well and was the only family in Bangchan that owned a camera. In the 1953 census this family became a part of the wife's mother's family because they had arranged to share the same food. The reason that was given for this new arrangement was that some time earlier the wife's brother, who had been living with his mother, got married and moved out to start an independent family, whereupon the old lady suggested that her daughter move in to fill the vacancy.

178 Case 9: In 1949, a family of three, consisting of
592 a young couple and their six years old daughter, worked as
621 farm hands for the wife's mother for fixed pay on which they
[573] were able to live independently. Two or three years later, the wife's mother asked this family to move into her household

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434 on a small plot that they own or rent, but all families
463 in this category derive their main income from wages.

3. Trader. Main income from the more or less regular sale, not production, of rather considerable amounts of goods. Perhaps somewhat arbitrarily, we have not included in this category those very few families who derive their main income from production of cookies or the like, even though such families might themselves perform the selling of their products to local consumers; such families are included in the 'home enterpriser' category below.

[426]
[427] 4. Investor. Main income from land rent, interest on loans, and/or speculative gain.

5. Professional. Main income from such specialties as midwifery or dramatic entertainment.

434
647 6. Public servant. Main income from, or majority of
463 working time spent in, government employment. This is the only category in which we had to add the additional criterion of "majority of working time"; government pay is rather low, and one person who works full time in the employ of the government actually receives more income from other sources.
[875] This category includes regular government officials, teachers
[622] and school janitors. The hamlet headmen are not included, however, as their main incomes are otherwise derived and their remuneration from the government is extremely low. They maintain no daily routine as public servants. The headmen are all farm operators, except one who is an investor.

178 doctors were practicing in 1953 than in 1949, while there
463 was no change in the number of midwives. In most cases,
621 however, these professional services had ceased to be the main sources of income of the families engaging in them.

621 In 1953, occupation defined as public service in-
434 cluded the jobs of an educational supervisor, one teacher,
463 two school janitors, two workers in the government-owned
647 Bangkok wharf, and one policeman. Actually, there were five
[875] Bangchan residents who were teaching in 1953. Only one of these, however, was a family head. Two of the other four teachers were husband and wife living with the wife's mother who was classified as an investor -- the most prosperous of the investors mentioned earlier in this section. Another teacher, a wife, was also living with her mother who was also an investor. The last teacher, also a wife, was living independently with her husband who was operating a rice farm, and the occupation of the family was thus classified as farm operating. With the possible exception of the policeman, all these public servants were well paid in the village standard, ranging from some four hundred baht a month for a janitor to eight hundred baht for the educational supervisor. After the 1953 census was taken, more regular jobs were opened to Bangchan residents by the Highways Department, and also more people took up regular jobs of a public service nature in Bangkok while retaining residence in Bangchan by commuting daily between the village and their offices. Thus,
[178] although the percentage figures remain constant during

178 finally, for a few families, took precedence over rice
463 growing. The relative importance of these new occupations remained low, however, since only a few families were needed to meet the village requirements for such services.

434 The establishment of the primary school some thirty
647 years ago opened up new jobs as teachers and janitors for
• 875 some educated villagers who were given preference over out-
[372] siders. It should be noted, nevertheless, that at the beginning the primary school teachers were not considered as regular officials and their pay was as low as six baht a month during the prewar years. Even during the war, they did not get as proportionately large a cost-of-living raise as did other regular officials. It was only after the war that they were made regular officials and that their pay rose almost a hundred times to 450 to 550 baht a month with provision for a steady raise to more than one thousand baht
[48] a month. This new occupation in public service also increased with the extension of the central government employment into the rural areas and with improved transportation facilities which permitted an individual to commute daily between his office in Bangkok and his home in Bangchan. Thus, a Bangchan resident is now serving as an educational supervisor in the nearby Minburi District and a few others are on the regular payroll of the government-owned Bangkok Wharf.

•243 With the background knowledge of the situation of
464 Bangchan farm laborers previously described in mind, we may
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